CITY OF SULL PORCE.

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: January 25, 2012

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Community Recognition of Raquel Vela Mendoza

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission recognize Raquel Vela Mendoza for her leadership in support of neighborhood pride and service to the City through resident advocacy.

DISCUSSION:

Raquel Vela Mendoza is a rare and resourceful resident. When she sees something amiss in her neighborhood, she does something about it by either making a phone call to the right person or correcting the situation herself. Raquel expresses her neighborhood pride through leading by example. If an area needs a clean-up, Raquel would get neighborhood youth to assist her to pick up the trash, and remove the graffiti. Commissioner Beebe Longstreet first remembers meeting Raquel, over 20 years ago, when she was sweeping the footbridge near their neighborhood. Raquel's can-do attitude and enthusiasm are infectious, pushing other residents to help make positive changes, too.

Raquel served on the Westside Community Center Advisory Committee from July 1997 until it's dissolution in November 2010. She was an outspoken advocate at the meetings, speaking frankly about resident issues. Through this committee, she offered to cook the annual Holiday posole dinner and for many years served over 70 families at the celebration and gift giving. She also assisted with neighborhood block parties, food distributions, and the salsa festival. Raquel went on to serve on the Neighborhood Advisory Council from April 2011 through December 2011, citing in her resignation that it was time for the next generation to participate and advise on the health and safety of our neighborhoods.

The Parks and Recreation Department would like to thank Raquel for her outstanding support of neighborhood activities and her many years of service working to improve the lives of children and families in Santa Barbara, particularly the Westside community.

SUBMITTED BY: Sarah Hanna, Recreation Programs Manager

APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

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